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(54) Title: OUTER CONTAINER FOR PACKAGED BEVERAGE			
(57) Abstract			
<p>A packaged beverage (2) comprises a bottle (4) contained within a bag (6). The bag has a lower portion (10) attached to the bottom of the bottle (4) and an upper portion (8). The lower and upper portions (8, 10) are joined together by a line of weakness (12) which enables a consumer of the beverage to remove the upper portion (8) to obtain access to the bottle (4). The bag (6) is substantially opaque and prevents incidence of light upon the beverage.</p>			

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OUTER CONTAINER FOR PACKAGED BEVERAGE

This invention relates to packaged beverages, and more particularly to packaged containers for beverages.

It has long been known to provide glass bottles as containers for beer. Originally it was found that if beer was contained in clear or green bottles it would degrade if exposed to light, and would develop a distinctive aroma which is considered to be unpalatable to beer drinkers. Such light degraded beer is described as "light struck". Conventionally beer bottles are comprised of brown glass. Brown bottles were adopted originally as containers for beer because it was found that brown glass prevents or inhibits beer becoming "light struck". This has lead to brown glass beer bottles being used as a traditional container for beer.

The problem of degradation of beverages by light is especially present in hopped drinks such as beers. However, degradation by light is a problem which may be encountered in beverages other than beer.

One known attempt at providing a solution to the problem of degradation by light is to sell beverages in bottles contained within sealed cardboard boxes. However while this does alleviate the problem to some extent, such a composite package is much bulkier than the bottle alone and incurs greater storage and transportation costs. Furthermore, the customer may not want to buy several bottles of beer packaged together.

In a further proposal, bottles are contained within a paper sleeve to protect the beer from light degradation. The provision of paper sleeves has associated disadvantages causing further problems.

Paper is not generally very tear resistant. Such paper sleeved bottles of beverages are likely to be kept in moist environments, for example refrigerators, and when a chilled bottle is placed in a warmer environment humidity from the surroundings is likely to condense as water droplets onto the paper sleeve and thus dampen the sleeve. Paper does not perform well when it is damp and accordingly paper is not a suitable material to serve as a sleeve for a bottled beverage in order to shield the beverage from light exposure.

It is an aim of the present invention to provide a new packaged beverage.

According to a first aspect of the invention we provide a packaged beverage comprising a container of beverage enclosed within a bag, sleeve, or sheath of material.

Preferably the sheath is adapted substantially to screen the container against exposure of the beverage to light.

Preferably the container is a bottle.

Preferably the sleeve or sheath comprises a bag, which is preferably substantially opaque. The bag is preferably sealed to enclose the container. The bag is preferably sealed at its upper end, for example by crimping. The bag or sheath preferably substantially fully encloses the container.

Preferably the sheath is comprised of a flexible material. Most preferably the material is sheet material such as plasticised metallised foil or film,

or is metal or metallised foil or film. The sheath may be of plastics material.

Preferably the material of the sheath substantially blocks light with a wavelength in the range 300 to 550 nanometres, or blocks at least in that range. It may of course block a broader range than that, for example light with a wavelength less than 300 nm, or more than 550nm.

Preferably the material comprising the sheath is waterproof. Preferably the material is such that it is not weakened by exposure to moisture. Consequently, even if the bag becomes exposed to dampness, the mechanical integrity of the bag will not suffer or be compromised to any significant degree.

Most preferably the outer sheath of material is substantially sealed, although it may not be airtight, or fully airtight.

An advantage of substantially sealing the container within the outer sheath is that this provides a convenient tamper evident package. Opening the sealed sheath to tamper with the bottle is likely to destroy the sheath, making the fact that the packaging is not in its intended condition evident to the user or supplier of the packaged beverage.

A further advantage of substantially sealing the container in the sheath is that the container stays substantially clean. Once the sheath is sealed dirt cannot enter the package (or it is difficult for it to do so) and so the container is likely to be in its original condition when the sheath is opened, rather than being dirty. This improved hygiene is attractive

because it is becoming more fashionable in certain areas to drink from the bottle, rather than using a glass.

Preferably the sheath is provided with at least one line of weakness adapted to enable the sheath to be opened. Preferably the line of weakness encircles a region of the container. However the line of weakness may be provided elsewhere, for example at the top of the bag or sheath. The line of weakness may extend longitudinally of the bottle, or other container, held in the sheath or bag, or it may extend transversely. It may have a longitudinal and a transverse portion, or a "diagonal" portion. Preferably the line of weakness substantially encircles the container. The line of weakness may extend substantially completely or partially around the bag. The line of weakness may define a junction between a first region and a second region of the bag. The line of weakness may comprise perforations and may not be entirely impermeable to water (although the sheet or film material will usually be so). There may be more than one line of weakness. When the container is a bottle the line of weakness is preferably provided at, or adjacent, a shoulder or neck region of the bottle.

Preferably the sheath or bag has a first region and a second region divided by the line of weakness, the first region being detachable from the second region of the bag. The first region may be provided above the second region. The sheath or bag may have a first, upper, region breakably connected to a second, lower region, with the upper region being removable completely or partially from the container.

There may be a third sheath or bag region breakably connected to the second region by a second line of weakness. The second region may be tearable partially or completely from the first and third regions of the sheath. The second region may be a tear-off band or strip.

Preferably the line of weakness is adapted to be disrupted in use by relative movement of the two adjacent regions. The relative movement may be in a direction generally parallel to the line of weakness, for example by twisting one region relative to the other. The line of weakness may be at such a position relative to the height of the container that the container provides support for the sheath or bag above and below the line of weakness as the user grips the sheath above and below the line of weakness prior to twisting the sheath to open it. The line of weakness may be adjacent, but below, the neck of a bottle (when the container is a bottle). The line of weakness may be adjacent the shoulders of a bottle.

Separation of the two regions may be performed manually by a consumer of the beverage. The consumer may simply be able to rip the upper region off the lower region, possibly using one hand to hold the container and the other to remove a portion of the bag. The upper region of the sheath or bag may have a graspable region which the user grasps to rip off the upper region. The user may grab a top region of the upper region and pull it in a direction longitudinal of the container so as to rip it off.

The two bag regions may be wholly detachable from each other or they may be separable around

substantially most of the line of weakness and yet remain joined together at a joining region.

The container may be in fixed relationship with the lower region of the bag. It may be glued, or just a close or tight fit (for example it could be shrunk on). A lower region of the bottle may be attached to the lower region of the bag. Preferably the attachment of the lower region to the container may be over a small area. The attachment may be localised to around a single point or region. The attachment may be provided by means of a tab interposed between the bag and the container. The tab may be coated with adhesive. The adhesive coating of the tab may be double sided.

The attachment of the lower region to the container at a single point can, when the lower region is a close fit around the body of the container, cause the lower region to deform so as to pull itself against the container when a user tries to slide the lower region off the container (after the upper region has been removed).

The area of attachment may be provided on the side of the container. In the case of a bottle it may be provided below the shoulder region of the bottle. The attachment region may be provided adjacent to the line of weakness.

If the lower region remains attached to the container, it may not be simply discarded when the bag is opened and this reduces the amount of litter which may be created.

In use, it may be desirable for the lower region of the bag to remain joined to the bottle even when the

top region of the bag is removed or substantially detached from the top region.

The film or foil material comprising the sheath or bag may act as an insulating layer between the hand of a consumer of the bottled (or canned) beverage and the bottle itself (which may be chilled). Insulation provided by the bag may prevent the hand of a consumer becoming chilled by the bottle. Additionally the film may serve as an insulating layer, insulating a chilled bottle against ambient or warmer surroundings. The sheath or bag may maintain a layer of cold air between the bottle and the surroundings preventing the warmer temperature of the surroundings from warming the beverage. The film or foil material of the bag may reflect radiant heat from the surroundings and act to keep the bottled beverage cold. When the sheath or bag is opened the part of it that is still held over the container will still have its insulating affect. .

According to a second aspect of the invention we provide a packaged beverage comprising a container of beverage enclosed within a bag or sheath of material in which the sheath of material is adapted to insulate the container from the temperature of the surroundings of the packaged beverage.

This enables us to provide a method of keeping beverages cold (or hot) at their locality of consumption.

The container may be a bottle. Alternatively it may be a can or a sealed cardboard container.

The bag may serve a further purpose in that it acts as a physical barrier between the bottle and the

environment. Most especially it serves as a barrier which protects the surface of the bottle against impact by external bodies. Impact by external bodies generally leaves scratches and micro-cracks in the surface of unprotected bottles and this leads to a reduction in strength of such bottles. The sheath or bag may help to reduce scratches and/or help to cushion blows. As previously discussed, the bag or sheath may improve hygiene.

According to a third aspect of the invention we provide a beverage container comprising a bottle enclosed within a bag or sheath of material in which the sheath is adapted to protect the surface of the bottle.

The labelling of the beverage container may be achieved by printing directly onto the bag rather than on a label to be affixed to the bottle. Accordingly a label fixed to the bottle may no longer be required. Furthermore, bottles used in containers according to the invention may no longer have to be manufactured having a region of their surface adapted to receive adhesive labels.

Preferably the bottle is of a conventional type having a crown cap or twist off cap that can be removed manually by a consumer of the beverage, with or without an appropriate tool.

According to a fourth aspect of the invention we provide a method of protecting a bottle of beverage from the influence of light by enclosing the bottle of beverage within a bag, sleeve or sheath of material.

A further advantage of covering a container of beverage, such as a bottle with an outer container, is that it enables us to provide a ready method of awarding prizes. It is sometimes desirable to promote the sale of a beverage, or other product, by having some of the product carry a prize winning marking, or even actually awarding a prize there and then with the package. Previously this has for example been done in connection with cans of beer by printing a prize-winning indication on the underside of the ring pull tab. In the case where prizes are to be awarded instantly with the product, it has previously been proposed to use dummy product packages which contain a prize, for example a dummy can of beverage which contains a banknote. This is rather complicated and expensive to make.

We have appreciated that we can simply have the prize, or prize winning indication present between the container and the bag or sheath which encloses the container. For example a prize winning indication may be given by a bottle or can being a different colour from usual, or the indication may be printed on the outside of a bottle or can which is packaged inside an external packaging. Alternatively the prize winning indication may be printed on the label of a bottle enclosed in a sheath, or on the crown of a bottle so enclosed, or it may be carried on the inside surface of the enclosing sheet material. Of course we could provide a prize winning indicator on a ticket provided between the container and outer sheet packaging.

We can also provide an immediately received prize between the bottle and the enclosing sheet material, for example a banknote. The banknote could, for example, be wrapped around the lower portion 10 of the

embodiment of Figure 1, or around the neck of the bottle 4 of the embodiment of Figure 1.

A purchaser should not, ideally, be able to tell which packaged product contains a prize (or prize indication). In the case of banknotes (or tickets) they could be provided in such a way that they cannot be felt, or alternatively dummy tickets/banknotes could be provided in some packaged products and real banknotes/tickets in "winning" products. The dummy tickets/banknotes could, in fact, be advertising material or literature of an informative nature. A piece of paper the same size and feel as a banknote introduced into non-winning packages, and a genuine banknote into winning packages could be one way of promoting a product (the banknote/dummy banknote remaining behind the outer sheet material). Thus although a consumer may be able to feel that presence of something, he will not know whether it is a banknote or just a bit of paper.

According to another aspect of the invention we provide a method of awarding prizes to consumers of a product held in a container comprising hiding the prize, or prize winning indication, within a sealed layer, bag or sheath, which also contains the product being promoted.

Preferably the product is a beverage.

Preferably the prize is awarded immediately (rather than simply being a winning indication). The prize may be a banknote, entrance ticket, or other flexible article.

The product need not be a beverage. It could for example be tinned produce.

According to another aspect of the invention we provide a packaged product having a container held within an overlayer, bag or sheath, and a prize or prize winning indicator hidden by the overlayer, bag or sheath.

An embodiment of the invention will now be described by way of example only with reference to the accompany drawings of which:

Figure 1 shows a packaged beverage according to the invention;

Figure 2 shows a step in a schematic method of manufacturing the packaged beverage;

Figure 3A shows another embodiment of the packaged beverage according to the invention;

Figure 3B is a schematic horizontal cross-section through the packaged beverage of Figure 3A;

Figure 4 shows a packaging machine adapted to produce a packaged beverage in accordance with the invention;

Figures 5 to 7 show details of the machine of Figure 4; and

Figures 8a to 8f show details of stages in the manufacture of a packaged beverage using the machine of Figure 4.

Figure 9 shows a method of opening the packaged beverage;

A packaged beverage 2 is shown in Figure 1 and comprises a bottle 4 wholly enclosed by a substantially airtight, and light proof metallised plastics film bag 6. The plastics film is a PET (Polyethelene Teraphthalate) monomer laminate and is comprised of two layers of PET laiminated. The bag has an upper region 8 and a lower region 10. The division between the upper and lower regions is defined by a line of weakness 12 provided in the material of the bag. The line of weakness 12 wholly encircles the bottle 4.

Figure 2 shows schematically a possible step in the manufacture of the packaged beverage. In this schematic (and presently non-preferred) example the bag is manufactured such that it has an open top 14 and a closed bottom 16. The bottle 4 is placed in the bag such that the bottom of the bottle 18 sits at the bottom 16 of the bag. The bottom 16 of the bag and the bottom of the bottle may be joined together, for example by adhesive which may have been provided on the surface of either, or both, beforehand (or alternatively they may not be joined together). This creates a bond between the two surfaces. Alternatively the surfaces may be heat sealed together, for example by localised melting of the bag to the bottle or by providing localised melting of a layer provided on the inside of the bag or outside of the bottle to form a bond. The adhesive or layer may be a heat cured adhesive which forms a bond when heat is applied to it. However, in another embodiment the bag (or a portion of the bag) may simply be shrunk onto the bottle to grip it (or at least to grip the bottom part of it).

The bottom of the bottle and the inside surface of the bag at its bottom may be joined together at a joint area between these regions only, or the joint area may extend substantially up the body of the bottle, perhaps as far as, or nearly as far as, shoulders 20 of the bottle.

The bottle 4 is sealed with a cap 24. In this embodiment this is a screw-off crown enabling a consumer of the packaged beverage to remove it by hand. Since the bottle 4 is sealed within the bag 6, a screw-off crown can be used without fear of the bottle or its contents being tampered with.

The line of weakness 12 is provided by a series of perforations made in the material of the bag which could be holes which pass through the entire thickness of the material of the bag. However it may be desirable for the bag to be more air-tight, light-tight, or completely water-tight, in which case the perforations would be replaced by deformations or weaknesses of the material of the bag which although compromise the mechanical integrity of the bag, do not puncture the bag and thus air-tight, light-tight or water-tight sealing of the bag around the bottle 4 is maintained. In a preferred embodiment the line of weakness is provided by a line of laser "half cut" with alternating regions of undisturbed material and holes extending all the way through the material.

An advantage of having a line of weakness which does not actually puncture the material of the bag is that it allows the bag to be more light proof. However in the preferred embodiment the line of laser cut perforations are "full cut", but allow minimal light

ingress through the line of weakness and to the beverage.

Once the bottle is placed in the bag and the bottom region of the bag held fast by whichever means to the bottom of the bag, the top of the bag is closed by heat crimping to form a crimped portion 21 and thus result in a sealed bag. If the line of weakness 12 according to the embodiment discussed above is omitted, the bag may be opened by a user pulling the top of the bag open across its heat crimping. In such an embodiment the line of weakness may be provided by a crimping line of the crimped portion 21.

Figure 3A shows an alternative embodiment of a packaged beverage 2'. The packaged beverage corresponds to that of Figure 1 except that the lower region 10' is held onto the bottle 4' by means of a double sided sticky tab 62. The tab 62 has a comparatively small area compared to the surface area of the bottle 4' enclosed by the lower region 10' of the bag 6'. The tab 62 is located just below the line of weakness 12'. In this embodiment there is no need for adhesive contact between the bottom 16' of the bag and the bottom 18' of the bottle.

The tab provides holding at one point. By providing adhesion at one point near the shoulders 20' of the bottle the sticky tab does not need to be very strong. Since the lower region 10' is a close fit over the bottle 4', if a person attempts to pull the lower region 10' off the bottle, the lower region 10' is held at one point, the lower region 10' deforms in shape and a greater area of the bag 6' grips onto the bottle 4' and friction prevents removal of the lower region 10'. Therefore the lower region 10' is difficult to remove

simply by pulling along the longitudinal axis of the bottle 4'. There is no risk that the lower region 10' will be able to slide off the bottle 4' accidentally. However, if it is desired to re-cycle the packaged container 2' the bag may be removed very easily by cutting open the bag 6' and peeling it off the bottle 4' since there is a very small area of adhesion.

The method of removal of the upper region 8' is shown in Figure 3. The user grips the top of the upper region 8', above the top of the bottle, and pulls upwards (preferably with a snap, fast, movement). This pulls the upper region off.

The tab 62 is hidden behind an axial seam flap 64, as shown in Figure 3B.

In the embodiment of Figures 3 the bag 6' is a two layer laminate of PET plastics material, with a metalised outer coating.

Figure 4 shows a packaging machine or installation 40 which produces packaged beverage 2 in a more practical manner than that of the schematic example of Figure 2.

The machine 40 has a main bed 41 which has a conveyor 42, film provision means 43, film tensioning means 44, tube forming means (typically a folding box) 45, axial seal forming means 46, end sealing and package separation means 47, base folding means, and package removal means 49.

As shown in Figure 4, a roll 50 of metallised film is provided at the film provision means 43. The film has lines of weakness 12' provided across it. The film

comprises a two, three, or more, layer laminate metallised film, and the lines of weakness are made in the web of film by a laser before it is provided to the machine 40 as the roll 50. The laser cuts or melts through at least one layer of the laminate film but not through at least one other layer to produce the lines of weakness 12'. This can be achieved by using laminate layers with different laser light absorption characteristics. Of course, we could alternatively provide a perforation knife, or laser, on the machine 40.

The tensioning means 44 tensions the web of film to an appropriate tension.

As a line of bottles 4 are moved along by the conveyor 42 they contact the underside of the web of film. The tube forming means 45 (not shown in Figure 4, but shown in Figure 6) shapes the web into a tube 51 which surrounds the bottle (in fact the bottle is between the tube forming means 45 and the end sealing and package separation means 47). The tube forming means 45 comprises a horse-shoe section guide wrapping the film taut around the sides of the bottle 4 as the bottle moves to the axial seal forming means 46.

The axial seal forming means 46 is shown in Figures 4 and 6 and comprises pairs of rollers 52 which take the free axial edges of the tube 51 and heat seal them together. The axially sealed tube, plus bottle, then reach the end sealing and package separation means 47. This is shown in Figures 4 and 7.

The end sealing and package separation means 47 comprises a pair of heated jaws 53 which crimp the tube 51 to seal the tube transversely and also to sever

the tube in the sealed and crimped region. Each crimping operation forms a bottom end seal to a first packaged bottle and a top end seal to the next packaged bottle.

The bottles sealed in a film envelope (Figure 8a) proceed to base folding means (shown in Figures 8a to 8f).

The bottom crimped end of the film envelope has a pair of wings 54 formed in it (Figure 8b), and the wings folded inwards (Figures 8c and 8d). The wings 54 are then sealed down (Figure 8e) to leave a generally flat base to the packaged beverage (see Figure 8f).

The packages of beverage 2 are then carried away from the machine by removal means 49. The lower region of the packaging film which overlies the main body portion of the bottle is then heat-shrunk to grip the main body of the bottle firmly. The lower part of the bag containing the bottle is preferably shrunk by about 2-3%. Alternatively the wrap may be tight enough to remove the desire to shrink the film onto the bottle.

The seals that the rollers 52 and the jaws 53 produce are inner surface - inner surface (or A-A) seals. The sealing of the wings 54 in Figure 8e is outer surface-outer surface (or B-B).

In the schematic arrangement of Figure 2, or the more practical one of Figure 4, the bag of protective film may have an air vent, for example in its upper crimped region. Conveniently, the air vent can be formed simply by having a narrow axially extending region of the sealing and crimping jaws 53 which do not seal. An air vent is schematically shown in Figure 1 as

reference numeral 60. The air vent allows any gas (for example carbon dioxide) that may leak from the bottle to escape from the packaging so that it does not inflate. It will be appreciated that the air vent is still substantially light-tight: light is substantially prevented from reaching the main body of the bottle.

In use a consumer of the packaged beverage buys the packaged beverage 2. The packaged beverage may be chilled. The user rips the upper region 8 off the lower region 10. The upper region of the bag may then be discarded. The lower region of the bag remains joined to the bottle and provides an insulating layer between the chilled bottle and the hand of the consumer. The neck 22 of the bottle 4 is accessible and the consumer can remove the cap 24 of the bottle by twisting it by hand. The beverage in the bottle may then be consumed by the consumer. It will also be appreciated that the unopened packaged beverage remains cold for longer than would a corresponding bare bottle.

Figure 9 shows one way of ripping off the top of the bag. The user grips the lower region 10 of the bag with one hand and the upper region 8 with the other hand and twists to break the bag at the line of weakness. The top of the bag is thus ripped off with only one hand contacting it.

Another way of ripping off the upper region of the bag is to grip the bottom region below the perforation line (for example by the base seal) and grip the top seal (or some other part of the upper region of the bag) and snap or tear the top portion off by pulling it upwards. This may be as a sudden or sharp action or as a steady force until the perforation line gives way.

Another way of ripping off the region of the bag is to grip the upper region of the bag (for example by the axial, longitudinal, seal, or by any loose part of the upper region), grip the bottom region of the bag in the region where it is tight around the sides of the bottle (or by the bottom seal), and pull the upper region upwards, ripping off the upper region.

It will be appreciated that the bagged bottle of Figure 1 prevents light damage to the beverage, provides a tamper-evident indicator, improves the hygiene of drinking from the bottle, allows the bottle to stay chilled longer when in use, and enables us to award prizes, or prize indicators hidden by the outer bag.

CLAIMS

1. A packaged beverage (2) comprising a container of beverage (4) enclosed within an outer bag, sleeve or sheath of material (6).
2. A packaged beverage (2) according to claim 1 in which the sheath (6) is adapted substantially to screen the container against exposure of the beverage to light.
3. A packaged beverage (12) according to claim 1 or claim 2 in which the sheath (6) is substantially opaque.
4. A packaged beverage (2) according to any preceding claim in which the sheath (6) is comprised of a flexible material.
5. A packaged beverage (2) according to any preceding claim in which the sheath (6) is comprised of plasticised metal foil or film, or metallised foil or film.
6. A packaged beverage (2) according to any preceding claim in which the sheath (6) comprises a first region (8,10), and a second region (8,10).
7. A packaged beverage (2) according to claim 6 in which the first region (8) is adapted to be removed from the container (4) whilst the second region (10) is adapted to remain fixed to the container (4).
8. A packaged beverage (2) according to claim 7 in which the second region (10) is fixed to the container (4) by adhesive or by a tight fit between the container (4) and the sheath (6).

9. A packaged beverage (2) according to any preceding claim in which the sheath (6) is attached to the container by one or more discrete adhesive regions.

10. A packaged beverage (2) according to any preceding claim in which the sheath (6) is provided with at least one line of weakness (12) adapted to enable the sheath to be opened.

11. A packaged beverage (2) according to claim 10 in which the line of weakness (12) is adapted to be disrupted in use by relative movement of two adjacent regions (8, 10) of the sheath (6).

12. A packaged beverage (2) according to any preceding claim in which the container (4) is substantially sealed within the sheath (6).

13. A packaged beverage (2) according to any preceding claim in which there is a prize, or prize winning indicator, hidden by the sheath (6).

14. A packaged beverage (2) according to any preceding claim in which the container is a bottle (4).

15. A packaged beverage (2) according to claim 14 as it depends from claim 10 in which the line of weakness (12) is provided in the region of the shoulder of the bottle (4).

16. A packaged beverage (2) according to any preceding claim in which the sheath or sleeve is a bag (6).

17. A packaged beverage (2) according to any preceding claim in which the sheath acts to insulate the container (4).

18. A packaged beverage (2) comprising a container of beverage (4) enclosed within a bag or sheath (6) of material in which the sheath of material (6) is adapted to insulate the container (4) from the temperature of the surroundings of the packaged beverage (2).

19. A packaged beverage (2) according to claim 18 in which the sheath(6) is comprised of plasticised metal foil or film, or metallised foil or film.

20. A packaged beverage (2) according to claim 18 or claim 19 in which the container is a bottle (14).

21. A packaged beverage (12) according to any one of claims 18 to 20 in which the sheath is a bag (6).

22. A method of awarding prizes to consumers of a product held in a container (4) comprising hiding the prize, or prize winning indication, beneath an overlayer (6) which also contains the container (4) of the product.

23. A method according to claim 22 in which the prize or prize winning indication is hidden by a sealed bag or sheath (6) which encloses the container (4) of the product.

24. A method according to claim 22 or claim 23 in which the product is a beverage.

25. A method according to any one of claims 22 to 24 in which the prize is awarded instantly, being provided within the overlayer, bag or sheath (6).

26. A method according to claim 25 in which the prize is a banknote, ticket, or the like.

27. A packaged product (2) comprising a container (4) of the product held within an overlayer, bag or sheath (6), and a prize or prize winning indicator hidden by the overlayer, bag or sheath (6).

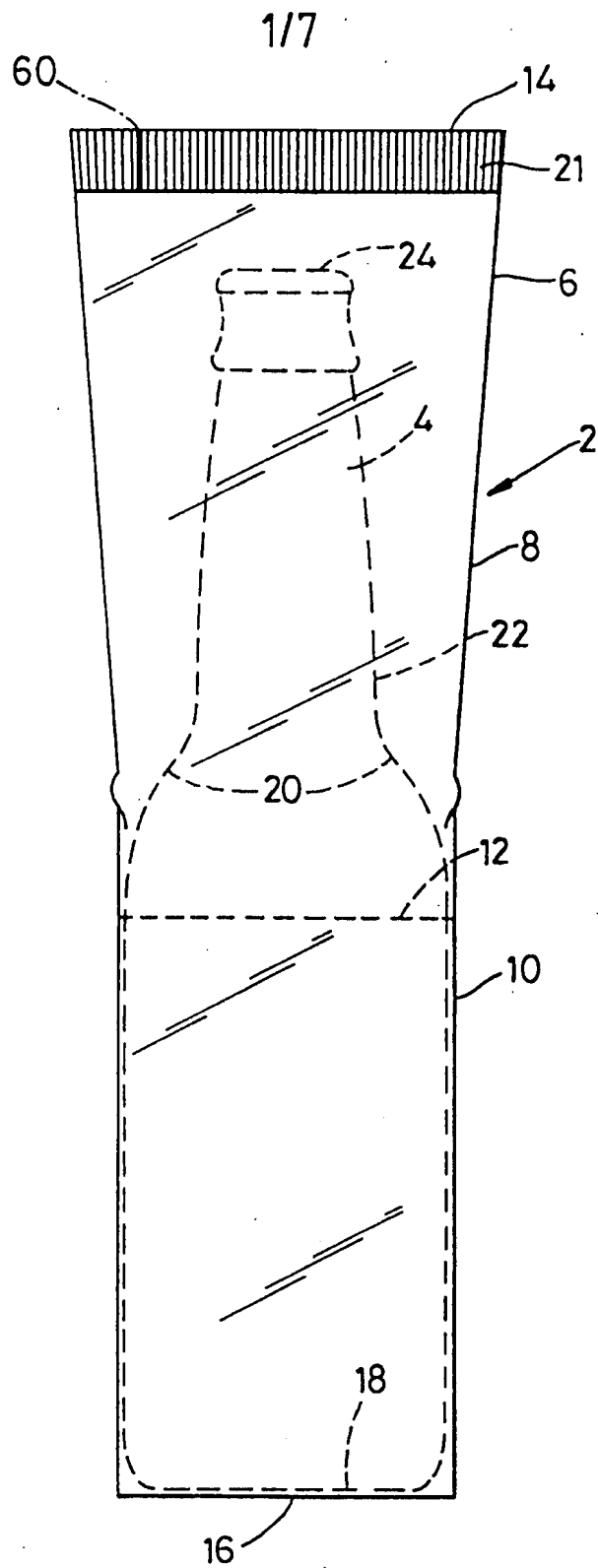
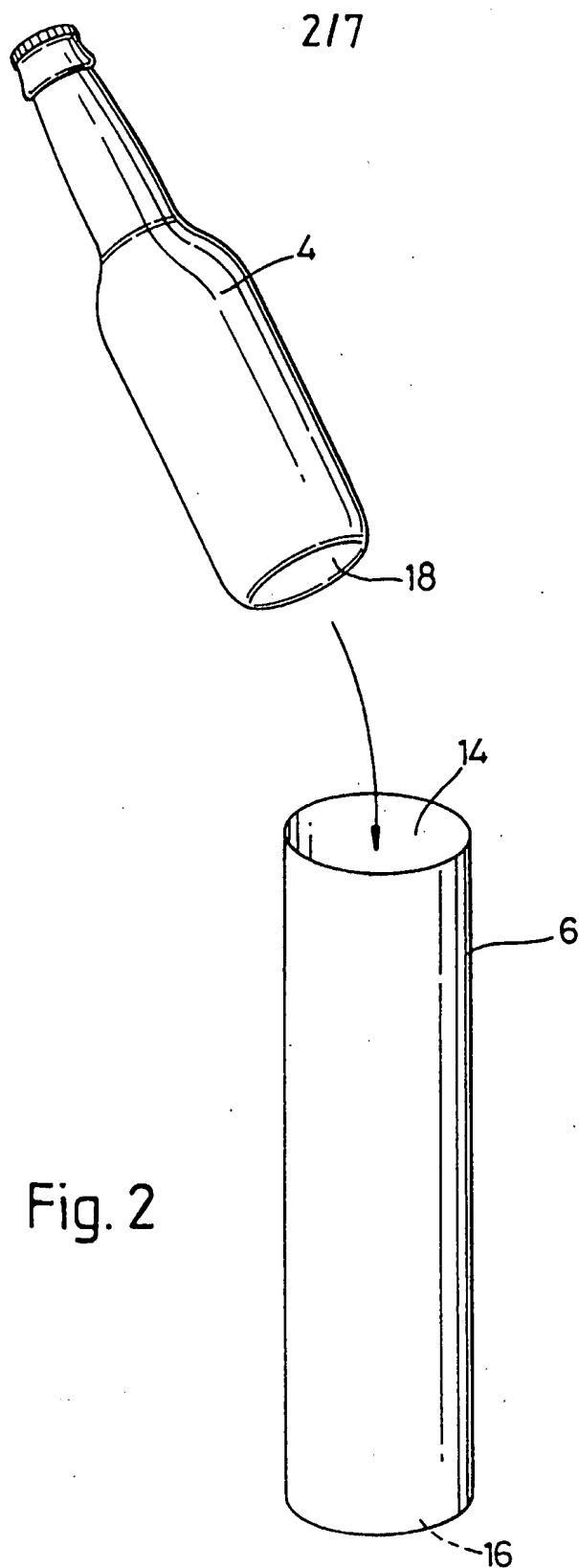


Fig. 1



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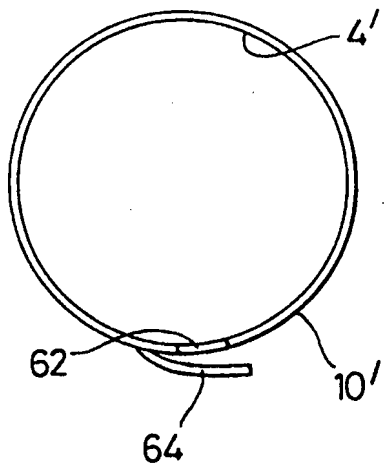


Fig. 3B

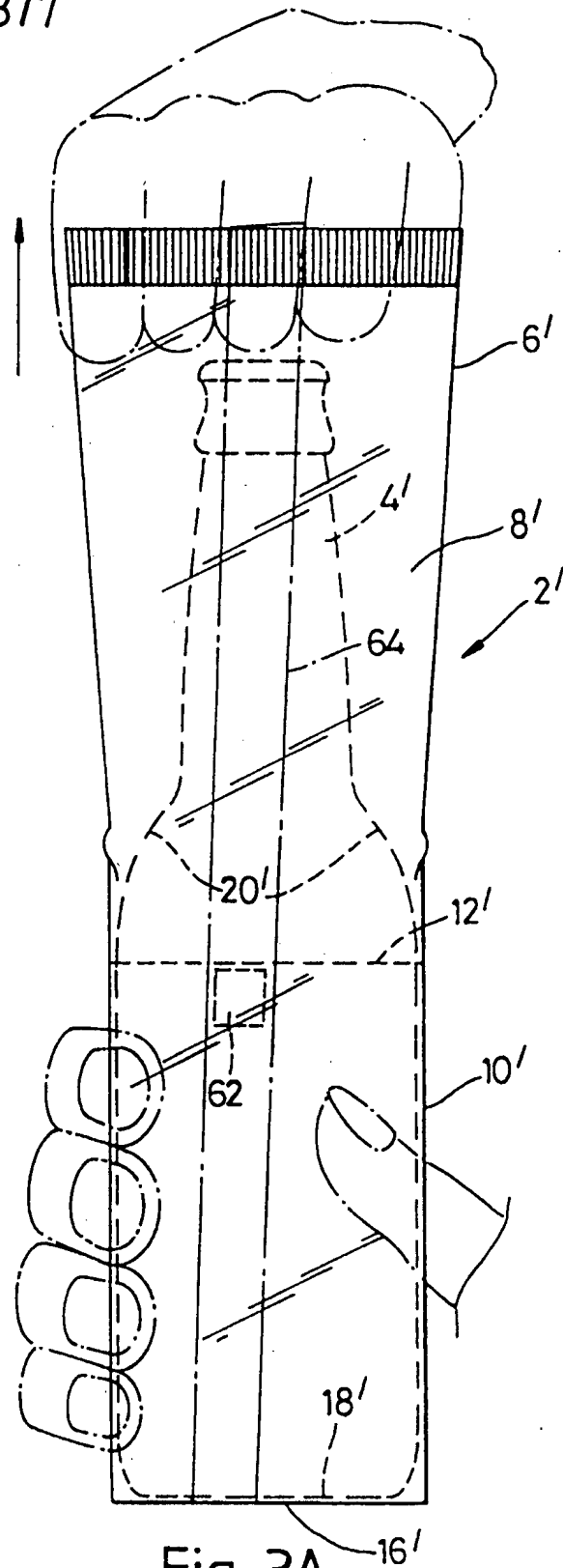


Fig. 3A

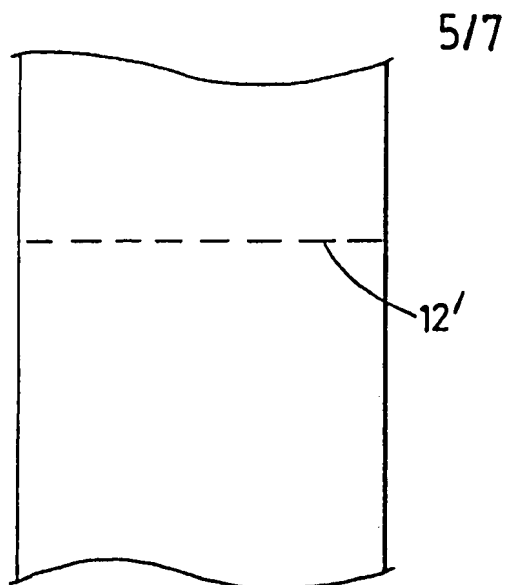


Fig. 5

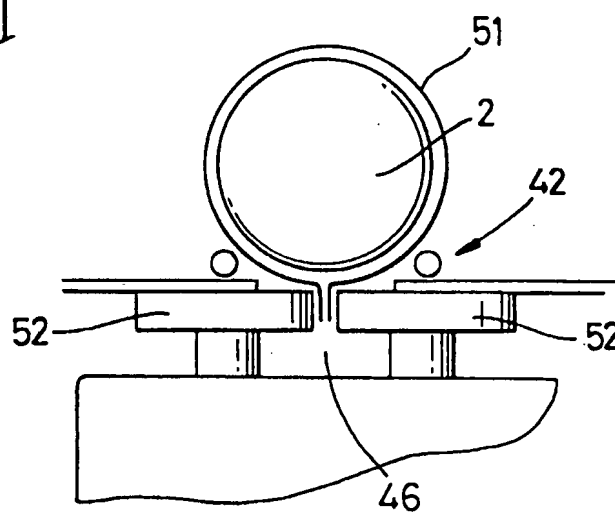


Fig. 6

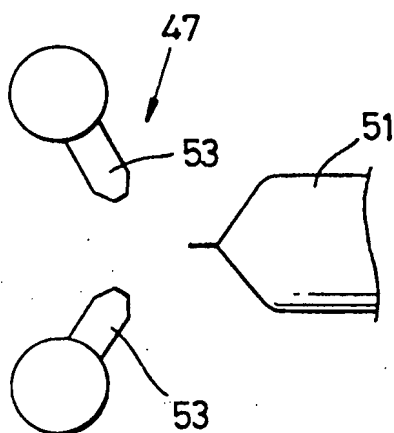


Fig. 7

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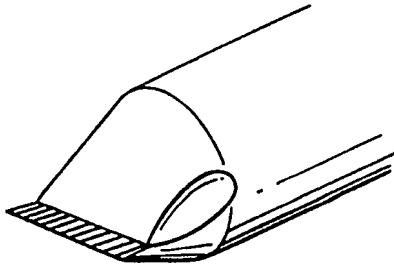


Fig. 8A

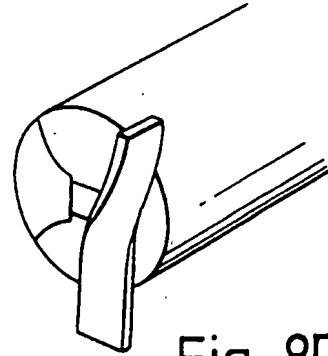


Fig. 8D

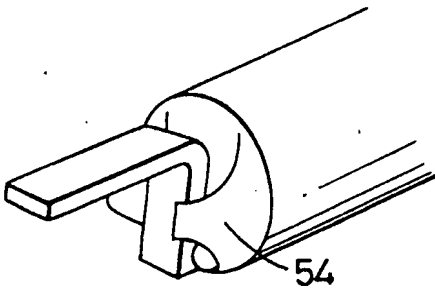


Fig. 8B

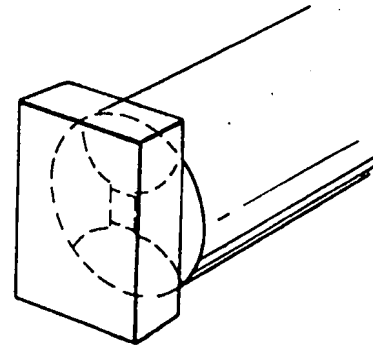


Fig. 8E

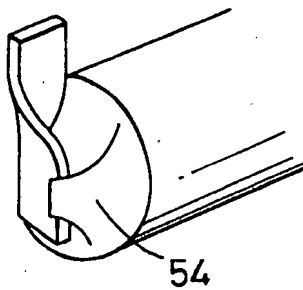


Fig. 8C

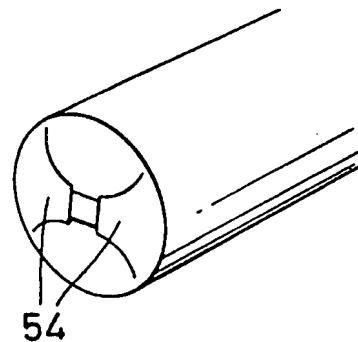


Fig. 8F

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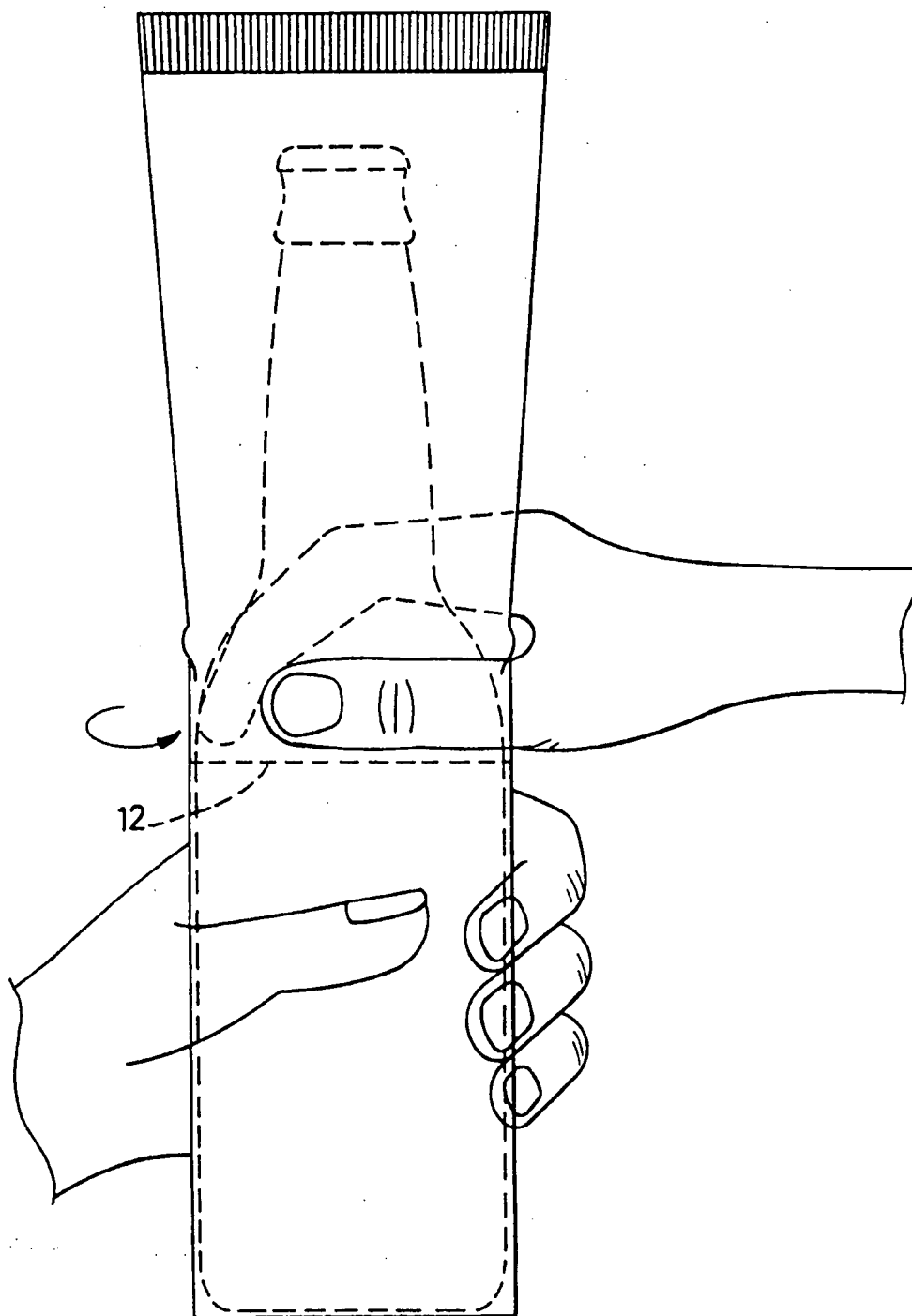


Fig. 9